



EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

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news digest

92153D

Presiding bishop takes anti-racism message on four-state tour of black ministries

Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning took the church's anti-racism message on a whirlwind tour of black ministries in four states and returned to tell his staff that he found a deeper sense of spirituality in the middle of the struggle than he had experienced any other time in his ministry.

Browning told parishes, participants in neighborhood feeding and housing programs, even the mayor of Chicago that "racism is a deep sin, bred in greed, that leads to violence, to the death of hope, and to the tragic waste of human potential." He visited parishes and soup kitchens in New Haven, a camp in South Carolina that has a national reputation for holistic ministry, a housing project and the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, and a rehabilitated housing project in inner-city Chicago.

Wherever he went, Browning listened to stories of people's lives and encouraged them to continue the struggle, assuring them that the Episcopal Church was determined to fight for the eradication of racism. (Page 8)

92154D

Browning tells lesbian and gay Episcopalians to 'hang in' despite church's ambiguity

During what some observers called a "dramatic pastoral visit," Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning issued a strong call to lesbian and gay Episcopalians to "keep the faith" and continue to "tell their stories" in a church that sometimes does not want to listen. "You've got to know how important it is for you to hang in," Browning told the nearly 200 members of Integrity, an organization of lesbian and gay Episcopalians and their

supporters, during its 14th annual convention in Houston, Texas, July 9-12.

In a sermon during the opening Eucharist and an open forum, Browning affirmed members of Integrity as "a part of this church... All over the country I say to the church that the gay and lesbian community is tired of being treated as an issue. They want to be treated as people." Browning also asserted that members of Integrity must show sensitivity toward those in the church who disagree with them. "Can you be the reconcilers Christ calls all of us to be without either denying the reality of your pain on the one hand or denying the possibility of its coming to an end on the other--without either minimizing what you have felt or allowing it to overcome you?" he asked.

"I think he said what needed to be said, that no one will be reconciled unless it is in the manner of Christ," said Bruce Garner of Atlanta, president of Integrity. "I doubt he will ever be the same--and probably Integrity won't either. His visit represented a portion of acceptance at God's table that we've been working for. We're not completely there yet--but this was another step." (Page 12)

92155D

Struggle over Richmond parish heats up after unauthorized episcopal visit

The struggle for the future of the Richmond, Virginia, parish affiliated with the traditionalist Missionary Diocese of the Americas (MDA) heated up recently after an unauthorized visit by a retired bishop, Donald Davies, head of the MDA. Davies visited St. Luke's Episcopal Church on July 26 to perform four confirmations without the permission of Southern Virginia Bishop Frank Vest.

Attempts to reconcile the parish with the Diocese of Southern Virginia have not succeeded since the parish voted to join the MDA last April. In early June, Vest informed St. Luke's rector, the Rev. Leo Combes, that he was inhibiting Combes from "performing any priestly or pastoral functions as an ordained person." In his letter, Vest told Combes that the diocesan standing committee had charged Combes with "abandonment of the communion of this church."

Meantime, cases pending in the Virginia courts may decide St. Luke's status and the struggle between the parish and the diocese over control of the church property. St. Luke's has filed a petition contending that a Virginia Civil War-era statute allows them to affiliate with the MDA and retain control of the church building. In a counter petition, the diocese claims that the 1867

statute is only relevant for congregations whose parent denomination has undergone a formal ecclesiastical "division." The case could be settled by the end of the year. (Page 16)

92156D

UBE struggles with persistence of racism--and its own identity

The Union of Black Episcopalians (UBE) wrestled with the persistence of racism in church and society and its own identity at its annual meeting in Atlanta, June 28-July 3.

A resolution sponsored by the young adult caucus and passed overwhelmingly by the 700 participants said that the UBE "provides the necessary context for developing a healthy black identity and community" and has "successfully maintained its racial integrity and its pledge to lead in the fight for racial equality." Taking its cue from black nationalist leader Malcolm X, who said that "there can be no black/white unity until there is first some black unity," the UBE decided not to open its membership to non-blacks.

The UBE sought new leadership by electing as president on the third ballot the Rev. Richard Tolliver, rector of a Chicago parish noted for developing affordable housing, to succeed incumbent Judith Conley of Iowa. (Page 19)

92157D

Presiding bishop visits riot-torn parishes in Los Angeles

Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning made a second visit to parishes in riot-torn Los Angeles in June, listening to the many stories of people's lives turned upside down by the April riots.

In addition to parish visits, Browning was taken on a whirlwind tour of the city's most damaged areas and heard about the ill feelings longtime African-American residents of Compton harbored toward Korean-owned businesses there. Browning commented that there was "a lot of mending to be done in terms of dealing with people."

Browning emphasized the solidarity and unity he felt with the people of Compton, based on the baptismal vows they share. Referring to a picture of

Jesus weeping over Jerusalem, his hands shackled behind him so he cannot help, Browning told Compton congregations, "If there is any way to unshackle the hands of Jesus, it is to rediscover and reaffirm and reclaim our baptismal vows, our oneness in Christ.... I am proud to stand with you because of all the work you are doing in your community." (Page 20)

92158D

Russian Orthodox and Episcopal theologians hold first round of theological dialogue

Theologians from the Episcopal Church and the Russian Orthodox Church met for the first round of theological dialogue and emerged with some practical suggestions for drawing the two churches closer together--including the exchange of bishops, seminarians, youth and agronomists. An agreement has already been signed for linking parishes of the two churches, according to Bishop Roger White of Milwaukee, cochair of the joint coordinating committee.

"The dialogue helped us see the need for a deeper, more common theology on episcopacy at both the theoretical and the practical level," said Prof. J. Robert Wright of General Seminary. He said that the dialogue was "very timely because it is related to the broader issue of authority in the church."

The Rev. William Norgren, ecumenical officer of the Episcopal Church, said that the dialogue established a deeper level of trust that encouraged the Russians to relate how they had survived over 70 years of persecution under the Communists. "We should remember that this church has martyrs second only to the early church," Norgren said. (Page 22)

92159D

Move to ordain women hits snags in Australia and England

During recent meetings, the General Synods in both the Church of England and the Anglican Church of Australia fell short of the required majorities to move ahead with the ordination of women. Although both synods indicated strong support for the ordination of women as priests, neither body had the required percentage to approve the measure.

In Australia, a measure that would have provided immediate approval

to ordain women garnered 70 percent of the vote, yet failed in the 75 percent required for passage. The measure will be considered again by the next meeting of the General Synod this winter.

In England, a poll of members of the General Synod's House of Laity indicated that support for the ordination of women as priests falls just short of the required two-thirds majority. A formal vote on the measure will be taken by the full General Synod in November. (Page 23)

92160D

Traditionalist bishops call on Canterbury for pastoral care

About 50 traditionalist bishops representing 13 provinces in the Anglican Communion gathered for the second International Bishops' Conference on Faith and Order in London and called on the archbishop of Canterbury to take the initiative in providing "pastoral care" for traditionalists.

The June 11-12 meeting ended with a Service of Witness and Festival of Faith that drew an estimated 8,000 brought together largely in their opposition to the ordination of women. In the letter delivered to the archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace following the meeting, the bishops asked for "a commission with equitable representation of views to study and recommend canonical provision for pastoral care within and between the provinces and dioceses of the Anglican Communion."

"At the heart of our statement is the feeling that the archbishop of Canterbury should be a father in God who doesn't take sides--on women as priests or any other issue," said Bishop Peter Hatendi of Harare (Zimbabwe) in a press conference after the meeting. "The statement calls on him to be a referee instead of taking sides." Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey supports the ordination of women to the priesthood. (Page 24)

92161D

Tutu warns South Africa is headed for chaos

In the face of a call by the African National Congress (ANC) for a general strike on August 3, Archbishop Desmond Tutu of Cape Town called for resumption of the stalled talks seeking to end the violence and prepare for democratic elections. He also condemned "in the strongest terms the ongoing spate of attacks against members of the South African police."

Tutu met with United Nations special envoy Cyrus Vance and told him

that the only way to avoid mass action that could "slide us into anarchy" would be for the government to take clear action to stop the violence. He also said that all parties should commit themselves to "a sovereign constitution-making body that has been chosen freely, democratically, by the people of our country."

Tutu told Vance that a "day of reconciliation" on August 3, with a voluntary shutdown of the economy, would be better than the ANC-sponsored mass action. The level of anger is so high, Tutu said, that violence will be difficult to avoid. (Page 25)

92162D

Changes in deployment will make clergy searches more inclusive

Parishes and dioceses seeking help from the Church Deployment Office (CDO) to fill vacancies will now receive packets of profiles that include profiles of women, blacks, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Native Americans. "For a long time the CDO had a policy on equal opportunity and affirmative action," said the Rev. James G. Wilson, executive director of the CDO. "What has changed is the implementation of that policy."

"Clearly there is a problem. Many women and many members of minority groups report great difficulty in being called to ministries in parishes and feel they have been the victims of discrimination," said Wilson, whose office is located at the Episcopal Church Center. "Now, on our own initiative, we do affirmative action searches as standard operating procedure."

Wilson said that he believes when vestries focus on the skills they need to do the kind of ministry they are called to do, the issues of race and sex become less important. "I've seen parishes surprise themselves once they discover that the person who best meets their criteria is, for example, a woman. They've surprised themselves by going ahead and hiring that woman." (Page 26)

92163D

House of Bishops meeting in Baltimore will emphasize introspection and biblical study

Planners of the upcoming annual interim meeting of the Episcopal Church's House of Bishops in Baltimore, September 4-10, said that meeting will center on Bible study and discussions about the common vision of its members, rather than legislative-style debates of past meetings.

"The meeting in Baltimore will continue to be significantly different from the usual interim meetings," said Bishop Heath Light of Southwestern Virginia, chair of the planning committee. The upcoming meeting comes six months after a special meeting of the House of Bishops in North Carolina declared its intention to reshape the style of meetings by moving away from confrontation. "The meeting in Kanuga was largely applauded by bishops," Heath said. "The sense of community was deepened dramatically, and the sense of refreshment and prayer was noticeable. It was an experience we didn't want to lose."

In Baltimore, five scholarly papers on the issue of scriptural authority, along with daily scriptural readings, will provide the basis for small-group discussions throughout the meeting, according to Light. On Thursday, September 10, Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey will participate in the meeting as part of his first official tour of the United States. (Page 27)

92153

Presiding bishop takes anti-racism message on four-state tour of black ministries

by James Solheim

The Episcopal Church will not tolerate racism--that's the message Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning preached on a whirlwind four-state tour of black ministries, July 23-27.

"Racism is a sin because it is incompatible with the vow we took at baptism to respect the dignity of every human being," Browning said at St. Luke's and St. Andrew's churches in New Haven, Connecticut, first stop on the tour. If the church is to curb racism in America, Browning added, it must first deal with its own racism. The church "must be fully aware that, as an institution in this society, it is not devoid of this sin. It must first remove the beam in its own eye," he said in a sermon.

While planned before the recent riots in Los Angeles, the trip took on a special significance because those events serve as "a stark reminder that racism is not dead, but alive and well," said the Rev. Canon Harold Lewis, staff officer for black ministries, who arranged the tour.

Lewis said that the 1991 General Convention clearly made the eradication of racism a top priority of the church and a good place to begin is the affirmation of programs in local parishes.

While in New Haven, Browning pitched in to serve meals at a local soup kitchen sponsored by St. Luke's, the third oldest black parish in the church. The presiding bishop and his wife, Patti, met with children who participate in a "Play and Learn" program, and later they met with clients at an adult services center housed at St. Andrew's.

The fact that St. Andrew's is searching for a new vicar elicited comments from Canon Lewis. Although encouraged by the election of more black bishops, he said that the shortage of black priests is a serious problem in the Episcopal Church.

During a Solemn Pontifical Mass for Social Justice at St. Luke's, Browning said that "the violence in our streets and the resurgence of the most blatant forms of racism" are the result of "sins of anger and envy in action." And he deplored the tendency to "blame the victim."

Browning criticized the Bush administration for its inadequate response to the Los Angeles riots. "Our task is made the more difficult when people highly placed in the administration attribute deep-seated social ills, which I

believe are the consequence of racism, to the absence of so-called family values....With each blow inflicted on Rodney King, 300 years of slavery, lynching, Jim Crowism, degradation, marginalization and lack of opportunity for African Americans came vividly and painfully to mind," he said.

Sometimes the differences that appear to divide groups within the church can be its greatest strength, Browning contended. "One of the unfortunate things about the Episcopal Church is that it doesn't always affirm its own diversity," he said. "We have differences of color, differences of theology, differences of spirituality. Sometimes that diversity gets pitted against itself."

'Racism cripples us all'

Browning took his message on to South Carolina, where he visited Camp Baskervill, which has a national reputation as one of the most holistic community outreach ministries in the Episcopal Church.

Browning assured the young campers and elderly residents at a housing project that Jesus was calling them to dream about their lives and not to be content to sit on the sidelines.

Later, at an informal gathering at Prince George Church in Georgetown, Browning said that inclusiveness and compassion are at the heart of the church and that the church must therefore uphold a "holistic mission to a badly broken world." During Evening Prayer at St. Cyprian's, Browning warned that "the sin of racism all too often finds a happy home in the bosom of the church--and racism makes cripples of us all."

Browning praised the attempts of the Diocese of South Carolina to recruit black priests and involve black laity in leadership positions, suggesting that the diocese could serve as a model for the rest of the church.

Assessment of a dream

The presiding bishop and his party were welcomed to Emmanuel Episcopal Center in Memphis by an energetic group of young people performing an elaborate dance and flag routine despite the sweltering heat and humidity. Browning had visited the center several years ago and said the changes were "truly a miracle."

The center sits in the middle of 1,400 units of public housing and runs almost 40 programs for the neighborhood. "They all began with building relationships--caring about people, listening to people," said the center's director, the Rev. Colenzo Hubbard. "When people come to their wit's end, they know where to come for help."

"He's one of God's special sons," Novella Smith-Arnold said after a

service of Eucharist and baptism, expressing the gratitude of many who said that they were honored that Browning included them on his tour and that he spoke so clearly about racism.

Later in the afternoon, Browning and his party toured the new National Civil Rights Museum, built on the site where Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated. At an ecumenical service Browning preached about "From Martin Luther King to Rodney King: The Assessment of a Dream." Again he issued a call for the church to take leadership in eradicating racism.

The occasion brought tears to some participants like Betty Isom, Emmanuel Center's director of community relations. "I cried at the Civil Rights Museum over the way he was talking about blacks and what Dr. King was trying to do--and also what he's trying to do."

Sacrament of concern for the city

Moving on to Chicago, Browning presided at the rededication of St. Edmund's Church and the dedication of the congregation's first venture in rehabilitated housing. The parish formed a corporation to buy abandoned, multifamily buildings in the surrounding neighborhood and restore them as housing for moderate- and low-income residents.

"Racism is a deep sin, bred in greed, that leads to violence, to the death of hope, to the shattering of dreams, and to the tragic waste of human potential," Browning said in his sermon. He commended the people of St. Edmund's for their "unfeigned loyalty to a church that has not always accorded you the respect you deserve."

Browning said that St. Edmund's Place, the 16-unit building he helped dedicate, was "more than just a place for people to live; it is an icon, an outward and visible sign, indeed a sacrament of your concern for this city."

Marina Carrott, former treasurer of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago and now commissioner of the city's department of housing, announced that her office had already approved plans for two more rehabilitation projects undertaken by the church's corporation. "I'm pleased to have a new partner in meeting the challenge of providing decent, affordable housing to the people of this city. As a 45-year member of the Episcopal Church, I'm so proud of this parish."

The Rev. Richard Tolliver said that Browning's presence "infused the congregation with greater enthusiasm. Today I saw Christ in the face of every parishioner and I heard his voice in our members." In response, Browning said that he sensed that the vision that drives a church like St. Edmund's "is not possessed by just one person but by the whole community that is worshipping and working together."

The next morning the presiding bishop visited a neighborhood feeding program at Sts. George and Matthias and a Head Start program and shelter for battered women operated by St. Thomas Church.

The Rev. Martini Shaw of St. Thomas said that the visit "empowers and motivates us to continue to provide these ministries," especially affirming "for us at the local level." Shaw said that his parish is involved in the rehabilitation of the first black YMCA in Illinois, located next to the church.

Shaw and Tolliver accompanied the presiding bishop to meet with Chicago mayor Richard Daley, in what Shaw described as a "very dynamic meeting." Having looked at dynamic ministries throughout the tour, and listened to dozens of stories of pain and struggle against racism, the presiding bishop and two of the church's more dynamic black priests had a chance to "speak the truth to power" and remind government leaders that the church was serious about the future of America's inner city.

When he returned to New York, Browning reminded the Church Center staff that "we can't do our ministry unless it is undergirded by a spirituality that begins with an understanding of our own brokenness and how we are met by Christ in that brokenness--healed and transformed so that we can be open to brokenness in others."

Browning said that he was especially moved during his tour by a deeper sense of spirituality than at any other time of his ministry and a close look at "the sting of racism." And yet the people he met "were not defeated but opened up" by their deep sense of hope and faith.

--based on reports by James Thrall in Connecticut, Harriet Goodbody in South Carolina, Julie Denman in Memphis, and Robert Stewart in Chicago

92154

Browning tells lesbian and gay Episcopalians to 'hang in' despite church's ambiguity

by Jeffrey Penn

During what some observers called a "dramatic pastoral visit," Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning issued a strong clarion call to lesbian and gay Episcopalians to "keep the faith" and continue to "tell their stories" in a church that sometimes does not want to listen.

"You've got to know how important it is for you to hang in," Browning told the nearly 200 members of Integrity, an organization of lesbian and gay Episcopalians and their supporters, during its 14th annual convention in Houston, Texas, July 9-12.

Browning's presence at the convention was the first by a presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church. The visit took place almost exactly a year after a highly contentious General Convention in Phoenix recognized the ambiguity Episcopalians have in addressing the issue of homosexuality.

"Phoenix called the church into a dialogue on the issue of homosexuality, and it seems to me that my visit to the Integrity meeting is an important way of modeling the church's willingness to be in dialogue on the issue," Browning said in an interview prior to the Houston visit. He noted that dialogue is a two-way conversation and "it is very important for the gay and lesbian community to be included in the dialogue, too."

Dialogue was watchword

Dialogue was the first item on the agenda of the convention and the watchword throughout. Members of the church's Standing Commission on Human Affairs held an open hearing and invited participants to "share their everyday experiences in the church." Representatives from the commission asked members of Integrity, "Have you been welcome? How have you been treated? Do you have full and equal claim with all other persons in your baptism?"

For three hours, members of Integrity told the commission that they had received a double message from Episcopal Church--a history of both acceptance and rejection, particularly in local congregations. One priest called it a "checkerboard of experiences."

Several persons reported that there are subtle messages of discrimination in most parishes against gay and lesbian persons, while others

reported examples of outright hostility.

Tom Martin of Lakeland, Florida, reported that he was run out of his church after his pastor warned him about God's punishment. "He said to me, 'If you become a practicing homosexual, you will have your blessings withdrawn from the Lord,'" Martin said.

A woman from the Diocese of California reported that she and her partner were denied communion by their priest unless they "confessed the sin" of their lifestyle.

A priest in the Diocese of Minnesota decried the "number of lies and deception on the part of us who are ordained already who are being open and honest. It is time for the church to wake up," he insisted.

"We are not asking for special consideration--just the same consideration," said the Rev. Jim Ferry, a priest in the Anglican Church of Canada who was recently removed from his congregation because he admitted to his bishop that he was involved in a gay relationship. "Not stones for the minority while bread for the majority," he asserted.

Perseverance in the struggle

At the heart of the convention, 500 people packed the Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church for a festival Eucharist in a setting that blended incense, organ and trumpets, and a procession of colorful banners from many of the 50 Integrity chapters across the country.

In a sermon that played off the theme of the convention, "All God's Children," Browning spoke of his eight-month-old grandson, Joshua. He said that he had both optimism and dread for the kind of world in which his grandson would grow up--a world that included bigotry, war and loneliness, but also compassion and reconciliation.

Browning paid tribute to members of Integrity for their perseverance in the struggle for acceptance in the church. "I thought about your origins. I thought about what it has cost you to be honest about who you are. I thought about how accustomed you must have become to having people, who have never met you, form judgments about you based upon what you are rather than who you are....And I wish with all my heart that you had never had to get used to that," he said.

Yet Browning also called on Integrity members to reject the "world's values" where all struggle is pitched in a "win-lose" scenario. "Is it possible to know the pain of what you have known and still find it within yourself to remain in the body where so much of that pain has occurred?" Browning asked. "Can you be the reconcilers Christ calls all of us to be without either denying the reality of your pain on the one hand or denying the possibility of

its coming to an end on the other--without either minimizing what you have felt or allowing it to overcome you?"

"May you always seek earnestly after the reconciling love Christ offers you in such abundance," Browning added. "May you gather strength and courage from one another and from the communities in which you live...."

During the communion, smiles and tears expressed the emotion of the congregation as individuals approached the altar rail. Browning later said of the Eucharist that "for just a moment I had a glimpse of the church that I have dreamed and visioned."

Members of Integrity greeted the presiding bishop with two thunderous standing ovations and gave him a stole that included symbols of Integrity and the lesbian and gay community. Local dignitaries and clergy welcomed Browning to the city of Houston, and Texas Governor Ann Richards sent a greeting praising Browning as "a strong and important leader in the Episcopal Church [whose] efforts to reach out to every member are deeply appreciated by all."

'We are evangelists'

"I think he said what needed to be said, that no one will be reconciled unless it is in the manner of Christ," said Bruce Garner of Atlanta, president of Integrity. "I doubt he will ever be the same--and probably Integrity won't either. His visit represented a portion of acceptance at God's table that we've been working for. We're not completely there yet--but this was another step."

"I am very glad he was here although he may take some flak for it," said Patti O'Kane of New York. "His visit was an affirmation of our ministry. We are evangelists. We work to reconcile the world to Christ, and we do that work despite our own pain. We've stayed. We're here."

Bryant Hudson from the Diocese of Dallas said that he had wept throughout the service. "It was gratifying and encouraging that the presiding bishop would come to Texas.... He gave us courage and hope to hang on when some of our homophobic bishops do not."

In an hour-and-a-half open session with Browning the following morning, members of Integrity engaged Browning in a face-to-face dialogue about their pain and hopes for their life in the church.

One priest reported that she had been asked to leave several parishes when it was discovered that she was a lesbian. She said that the experiences had been difficult, not only for her, but also for her partner and the two young children they are raising. "What do I tell my children?" she asked. She said that her children had always taken the bad news "better than I do. They said, 'Mama, things like that happen when you're gay.'"

A safe and affirming place?

Another woman told Browning that she and her partner had received the support and blessing of her local congregation, but the church had an uneven record in relating to gay people and she is worried about the future. Drawing on the image from Browning's sermon the night before, she told him, "If your grandson turns out to be gay, I hope he could have his relationship blessed, that he would find the church the safe and affirming place that many of us have found it, and envision it."

Patrick Waddell, who served as a deputy to the 1991 General Convention from the Diocese of El Camino Real, decried what he called the "timid and palsied statements that don't give any relief for gays and lesbians" adopted by the convention.

Browning urged members of Integrity to participate in the dialogue requested by the 1991 General Convention. "It's going to depend on you. You have to be willing to press your diocesan bishops. You need to see that this study material is used and be involved so that your voices can be heard.

"You are contributing to the health and well-being of the whole church. You are a part of this church," Browning said. "All over the country I say to the church that the gay and lesbian community is tired of being treated as an issue. They want to be treated as people."

"His [Browning's] visit was extremely encouraging. He spoke personally and from the heart," said the Rev. David Norgard, director of the Oasis Ministry with the lesbian and gay community in the Diocese of Newark. "We still have a ways to go on the road towards full acceptance of lesbian and gay people in the Episcopal Church, and I hope that he will be a part of that."

"The presiding bishop's ministry of presence really struck me," said Carol La Plante of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts. "To have such a visible symbol of the organized church among us to preach and celebrate was extremely important." Asked what she would take back home with her, La Plante said, "not only his witness but also ours, too. We, too, are working on being a church that has no outcasts."

Flavor was evangelical

Despite being dismissed a political lobby by some of its critics, the Integrity convention had a decidedly evangelical flavor. Throughout a variety of forums at the convention, speaker after speaker addressed two questions that seemed to form a kind of informal mission statement for the group: How can we share the Gospel of Christ in the lesbian and gay community? And how do we share our experience as lesbian and gay Christians with other members of the Episcopal Church?

The convention's business sessions and workshops resembled meetings of almost all other organizations in the church. Participants tinkered with details about budget and bylaws, shared ideas on how to encourage deeper participation by local chapters in the national organization, encouraged each other to promote a more inclusive racial and ethnic participation in the membership, and talked about how to be effective evangelists.

"The pain in the church over this issue is excruciating," said Sue Thompson of the Diocese of Atlanta as she reflected on the convention. "I want to dream of a church that is big enough for everyone. Everything I say is always taken as a political statement. I don't want those opposed to me who stay in the church to feel like they've lost if I stay. I want them to feel like it is their church, too."

Others expressed impatience. "It is time to get on to other work," said a woman from the Diocese of El Camino Real in one of the forums. "We've spent 20 years studying this issue. I would think that people in the church who are not gay or lesbian are tired of talking about this—we [in the lesbian and gay community] are certainly tired of it. There is so much more Christians can do with their time and money than debate that issue."

92155

Struggle over Richmond parish heats up after unauthorized episcopal visit

by Jeffrey Penn

The struggle for the future of St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Richmond, Virginia, heated up recently after an unauthorized visit by a retired bishop renewed questions about the relationship of the parish to the Episcopal Church. Retired Bishop Donald Davies visited St. Luke's on July 24 to perform four confirmations during the Sunday liturgy without the permission of Southern Virginia Bishop Frank Vest.

The visit was the latest development in an unfolding struggle between the parish and the diocese since the parish voted on April 5 to affiliate with the nongeographic Missionary Diocese of the Americas (MDA). The MDA was created by the Episcopal Synod of America (ESA) in an attempt to protect

traditionalists from what they called "hostile" dioceses. Davies was chosen by the ESA to provide episcopal oversight for the missionary diocese.

Attempts to reconcile the parish with the Diocese of Southern Virginia have not succeeded since the April decision. In early June, Vest informed St. Luke's rector, the Rev. Leo Combes, that he was inhibiting Combes from "performing any priestly or pastoral functions as an ordained person." In his letter, Vest told Combes that the diocesan standing committee had charged Combes with "abandonment of the communion of this church."

Davies describes visit as 'pastoral duty'

Despite the inhibition, Combes continued to serve as priest of St. Luke's, inviting Davies for an episcopal visit to confirm four congregants. Although Episcopal Church canons require bishops to receive permission to visit in other dioceses from the diocesan bishop, Davies contended that St. Luke's is part of *his* diocese--the MDA--and not a part of the Diocese of Southern Virginia.

"He didn't want me to come, but I told him I had a pastoral duty to perform," Davies told the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* of his conversation with Vest prior to the visit. He added that he had previously informed Vest that he would "travel through" the Diocese of Southern Virginia to get to St. Luke's.

In a July 23 letter, Vest requested that Davies "not make this visit. It would be pastorally disruptive to the life of this diocese to do so."

Although he opposed Davies's visit, Vest had no comment about it afterward, except to say that he expected "that the House of Bishops will have to take up this matter in Baltimore this September."

In a July 2 letter to Combes, Bishop William Wantland of Eau Claire urged Combes to seek ways to work out the difficulties with Vest. "It...gives time to see what can be done about the Missionary Diocese to make it canonical to avoid this problem in the future," Wantland said.

Wantland, a recognized scholar on canon law in the Episcopal Church and a bishop affiliated with the ESA, pointed out that current canons do not yet recognize the legal standing of the MDA. "The Missionary Diocese is made up of former Episcopal congregations, and priests not presently a part of, or in communion with, the Episcopal Church. While Bishop Davies is a bishop in good standing of the Episcopal Church, the diocese is not technically a part of that church, nor is it legally in communion with it," he wrote.

Thicket of legal questions

In the end, the debate over the control of St. Luke's property and, in effect, the validity of the MDA, may be determined by answers to a thicket of

legal questions pending in Virginia courts.

In early June, St Luke's filed a petition in the Virginia state court in Richmond, asking that the court declare that the church property belongs to the parish and not to the diocese.

The petition argued that a Virginia Civil War-era statute allows a parish in a hierarchical denomination to join a new jurisdiction when the denomination had undergone formal ecclesiastical "division." The 1867 statute was applied to congregations in the Methodist Church when it divided into two denominations over the issue of slavery.

The Diocese of Southern Virginia filed a counter petition asserting its ownership of the property under diocesan and national canons. The diocese called for a dismissal of the case, contending that the Episcopal Church has not undergone a formal "division," and therefore St. Luke's cannot seek redress under the statute. In addition, the diocese claimed that any recognition of property rights for St. Luke's without the bishop's permission would violate diocesan canons.

Diocesan officials said that the case may center on the court's interpretation of word "division" in the 1867 statute. Although St. Luke's might assert that the Episcopal Church is "divided" over theological issues, the MDA and St. Luke's have consistently contended that they have not left the Episcopal Church--only jurisdiction of established Episcopal Church dioceses. Even the parish's bulletin claims that it is "A parish of the Missionary Diocese of the Americas of the Episcopal Church USA."

Legal experts estimate that the case may be settled in the next few months. First, the court will have to rule on the motion of the diocese to dismiss the case. If the court declines to dismiss the case, then a trial to determine the question of the "division" and the property rights would follow. One observer said that, if there is a trial, it would probably happen "by the end of the year."

92156

UBE struggles with persistence of racism--and its own identity

The Union of Black Episcopalians (UBE) wrestled with the persistence of racism in church and society and its own identity at its annual meeting in Atlanta, June 28-July 3.

A resolution sponsored by the young adult caucus and passed overwhelmingly by the 700 participants said that the UBE "provides the necessary context for developing a healthy black identity and community" and has "successfully maintained its racial integrity and its pledge to lead in the fight for racial equality."

Taking its cue from black nationalist leader Malcolm X, who said that "there can be no black/white unity until there is first some black unity," the UBE decided not to open its membership to non-blacks.

Speaking for the young adult caucus, Bertie Ray III said that the vote was not meant to be separatist but was influenced by the verdict in the Rodney King trial in Los Angeles and was directly related to the powerlessness of blacks in American society. "Until we find ourselves with power--and that's power in its truest sense, political, economic and social--we are not in a position to open up the UBE."

Speaking at a youth service, Bishop Chester Talton of Los Angeles said that the King trial shook him from his complacency. "Whether I am suffragan bishop or not, I understand that if I am in the wrong place at the wrong time, my life is in jeopardy." Talton told the youth they must demand power, not to "wait until we give it to you."

The diminishing power of black males in the church leadership was raised by the Rev. Canon Edward Rodman of Massachusetts. In a letter sent to church leaders and discussed at the meeting, Rodman listed a number of prominent black men who had recently lost their positions. "You can get beaten without a stick, and you can be humiliated and marginalized without being put in jail," he said.

Two prominent blacks on the national staff brought special pleas for help. The Rev. Canon Burgess Carr, staff officer for refugee and migration ministries, said that the church had participated in successful attempts to double the number of Africans allowed to immigrate to 10,000. "We do need more black parishes participating in this resettlement program," he said.

The Rev. Nathaniel Porter, the new staff officer for Africa, asked for support for Liberia, almost destroyed by its civil war. Black church members

should remember the biblical story in which Joseph was sold into slavery in Egypt by his brothers but later sent them food to survive a famine. "Five hundred years ago we were sold into slavery by our brothers on the African continent. Perhaps we can be Joseph to our brothers and sisters who are in need," he said.

The UBE sought new leadership by electing as president on the third ballot the Rev. Richard Tolliver, rector of a Chicago parish noted for developing affordable housing, to succeed incumbent Judith Conley of Iowa. Tolliver was among those who sponsored the unsuccessful resolution opening a new category of membership to non-blacks and non-Episcopalians.

Treasurer John Harris said that UBE leaders have proposed hiring a full-time executive director next year. Conley said that UBE was "in positive dialogue with foundations about our goals for fund-raising."

--From a report by Ed Stannard, news editor of *Episcopal Life*, and Richard Walker of Reuters in Atlanta.

92157

Presiding bishop visits riot-torn parishes in Los Angeles

by Ruth Nicastro

Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning made a second visit to parishes in riot-torn Los Angeles in June, listening to the many stories of people's lives turned upside down by the April riots.

He visited St. Timothy's in Compton, its preschool and senior housing complex, and then sat down with members of the congregation to talk. Cecilia Patricio talked about the burning, looting and terror all around her, how her apartment was broken into and the shop where she worked was burned, and how she now had to worry about finding another job.

Patricio and other parishioners affected by the riots received immediate help through the bishop's discretionary fund and a \$25,000 grant from the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief.

St. Timothy's rector, the Rev. John Lathrop, said that St. Timothy's

also cared for many people in the neighborhood, as well as parishioners. "We have dispersed over 40 tons of food in the immediate area and 80 tons in a somewhat larger area," he said.

On his way to St. Martin's parish, Browning was taken on a whirlwind tour of the city's most damaged areas and heard about the ill feelings longtime African-American residents of Compton harbored toward Korean-owned businesses there.

It was apparent that some Korean-owned buildings had been carefully targeted. David Edmond of St. Martin's told the presiding bishop about tensions between shop owners and residents. "We have to dismiss most of the myths about both cultures," he said. "All African Americans don't steal, so you don't have to follow them around the store," he continued, in obvious reference to a recent shooting of a black customer in a Korean-owned store that only heightened the tension. Browning commented that there was "a lot of mending to be done in terms of dealing with people."

Members of both parishes joined in a festive Eucharist at which Bishop Chester Talton was celebrant and Browning preached--but they were also joined by members of the Korean congregation of St. Francis. The congregations have been involved in efforts at reconciliation between the two communities.

Browning's sermon emphasized the solidarity and unity he felt with the people of Compton, based on the baptismal vows they share. Referring to a picture of Jesus weeping over Jerusalem, his hands shackled behind him so he cannot help, Browning said, "If there is any way to unshackle the hands of Jesus, it is to rediscover and reaffirm and reclaim our baptismal vows, our oneness in Christ."

"I am proud to stand with you because of all the work you are doing in your community," Browning told the congregations. "I haven't felt so encouraged for a long time as I do after this morning."

92158

Russian Orthodox and Episcopal theologians hold first round of theological dialogue

by James Solheim

Theologians from the Episcopal Church joined counterparts in the Russian Orthodox Church for the first round of theological dialogue and emerged with some practical suggestions for drawing the two churches closer together.

The four-day meeting beginning on June 24 at St. Daniel's Monastery in Moscow was dominated by papers that explored the theological and historical foundations of episcopal ministry and the practical role of a bishop's ministry today.

"The dialogue helped us see the need for a deeper, more common theology on episcopacy at both the theoretical and the practical level," said Prof. J. Robert Wright of General Seminary in New York. He stated that the dialogue was "very timely because it is related to the broader issue of authority in the church." And he added that the dialogue established a new level of trust. "The Russians are now able to share with us the stories of how they survived 70 years of persecution under the Communists," Wright continued.

The Rev. William Norgren, ecumenical officer of the Episcopal Church, said that the trust level is higher than it has ever been and encourages both churches to discuss issues and problems. "We should remember, for example, that this church has martyrs second only to the early church," he said.

"This is a very historic moment--no one knows what is going to happen in this society," Norgren added. "Beyond the golden onion domes, the reality is that this is a church of the poor ministering to the poor, and we are trying to strengthen and assist them in their ministry."

Some very practical suggestions emerged from the Moscow meeting. An agreement has been signed, for example, establishing sister church relationships between the Russian Orthodox and Episcopal churches. A number of dioceses in both churches will also initiate an exchange of bishops, seminarians, youth and agronomists.

Bishop Roger White of Milwaukee, cochair of the joint coordinating committee, said that "there will be many ways Episcopalians can participate in the rebuilding of the Russian Orthodox Church. They want us to be their partners." White said that the first priority is the preparation of priests for the

thousands of churches that are being returned to the Russian church. The committee has already agreed to begin an exchange of seminary students this fall.

White said that the reception "was exceedingly cordial. There is real warmth towards the Episcopal Church. And everyone, from the patriarch on down, is very enthusiastic about the dialogue and the cooperation."

"The key here is education, broadly defined," Norgren said. The joint coordinating committee, established after an official visit to the former Soviet Union by Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning, is "clarifying specific mission priorities, trying to balance the theological dialogue and the practical possibilities for exchange," Norgren remarked. He added that evangelism and nurture will probably be the subject of a future dialogue because the Russian church is intensely involved in reaching out to its people.

92159

Move to ordain women hits snags in Australia and England

General Synods in both the Church of England and the Anglican Church of Australia fell short of the required majorities to move ahead with the ordination of women.

About 70 percent of the members of the houses of bishops, clergy, and laity in Australia voted in favor of legislation that would permit immediate ordination, just short of the 75 percent needed. The bill, which would allow each diocese to make up its own mind on ordination by repealing ancient English church law, must now be circulated among diocesan synods for debate and amendment before returning to a vote at a General Synod meeting in November or December.

The synod did pass a provisional canon that would come into force only if each of the 24 dioceses of the church agreed, which is highly unlikely under current circumstances.

Brisbane's Archbishop Peter Hollingworth made an impassioned call for the church to take decisive action. "We have come to the crossroads and we must now decide," he said during his introduction of the bill. "We have failed to exercise authority in this matter in the past three synods and this time we

can't afford to miss the mark," he asserted.

In seconding the bill, Bishop Peter Chiswell of Armidale said that he was still opposed to the ordination of women but added that it was no longer possible for the church to put its head in the sand, especially since 10 women priests were recently ordained in Perth. "The law is catching up with the change."

In opposing the bill, Archbishop Donald Robinson of Sydney reminded the synod that past attempts to approve the ordination of women had failed and "this canon is no more acceptable than the others to those who believe the ordination of women is opposed to apostolic faith and order."

Robinson challenged the view that the church could maintain its unity in diversity and said that the legislation would produce the opposite--a breach in communion. "It is not possible to have unity in this type of diversity," he asserted, suggesting that it might even be better to dissolve the church's constitution and let dioceses go their own way.

Meanwhile, the controversy over the ordination of women continues in the Church of England as it moves toward a crucial vote on legislation at its November meeting of the General Synod.

A vote in the House of Laity at the recent synod meeting in York was short of the two-thirds majority that will be required to open ordination to women. Opponents hailed the vote as a sign that opinion was moving against the ordination of women. The Movement for the Ordination of Women vowed to intensify with its efforts to educate members of the synod.

92160

Traditionalist bishops call on Canterbury for pastoral care

About 50 traditionalist bishops representing 13 provinces in the Anglican Communion gathered for the second International Bishops' Conference on Faith and Order in London and called on the archbishop of Canterbury to take the initiative in providing "pastoral care" for traditionalists.

The June 11-12 meeting ended with a Service of Witness and Festival of Faith that drew an estimated 8,000 brought together largely in their opposition to the ordination of women. In his sermon, Archbishop Donald

Robinson of Sydney (Australia) said that was not the only issue--the deeper issue that draws traditionalists together is "to protect the character of our church, whose visible authenticity depends on its adherence to apostolic faith and order, and on the preaching of the pure word of God within it."

The service was sponsored by Cost of Conscience, Women Against the Ordination of Women, and the Association for the Apostolic Ministry and was held shortly before the Church of England's General Synod met to consider legislation on the ordination of women.

In the letter delivered to the archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace following the service, the bishops asked for "a commission with equitable representation of views to study and recommend canonical provision for pastoral care within and between the provinces and dioceses of the Anglican Communion."

The letter argued that "historically the Anglican Communion has preserved unity by being obliged to live for a time with the fact of disagreement and now of impaired communion." In some cases, "radical solutions for pastoral reasons have proved acceptable," and now may be such a time. As the "personal focus of unity of the Anglican Communion," the archbishop of Canterbury should take the initiative in "determining some of the canonical principles upon which solutions can be found."

"At the heart of our statement is the feeling that the archbishop of Canterbury should be a father in God who doesn't take sides--on women as priests or any other issue," said Bishop Peter Hatendi of Harare (Zimbabwe) in a press conference after the meeting. "The statement calls on him to be a referee instead of taking sides."

The bishops will meet next April in Dallas and agreed to establish a permanent office at Faith House in London, under the auspices of the Association for Apostolic Ministry.

92161

Tutu warns South Africa is headed for chaos

In the face of a call by the African National Congress (ANC) for a general strike on August 3, South Africa seems to be moving to the brink of political chaos.

Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu of Cape Town called for resumption of the stalled talks seeking to end the violence and prepare for

democratic elections. He also condemned "in the strongest terms the ongoing spate of attacks against members of the South African police."

The police have been attacked for what the ANC regards as their role in black township violence. Tutu contends the escalating violence hinders the "urgent necessity to get on with the business of negotiating a legitimate and democratically acceptable government."

Tutu met with United Nations special envoy Cyrus Vance and told him that the only way to avoid mass action that could "slide us into anarchy" would be for the government to take clear action to stop the violence. He also said that all parties should commit themselves to "a sovereign constitution-making body that has been chosen freely, democratically, by the people of our country."

Tutu told Vance that a "day of reconciliation" on August 3, with a voluntary shutdown of the economy, would be better than the ANC-sponsored mass action. The level of anger is so high, Tutu said, that violence will be difficult to avoid.

Beyers Naude, an Afrikaaner clergyman who was banned for many years for his anti-apartheid activities, said that the mass action is a signal that the ANC has reached its limit on concessions it is willing to make for a new South Africa. He said that he is now convinced that "the government is not going to make any meaningful concessions. They are going to hold out for as long as possible" to ensure that "they remain in control."

92162

Changes in deployment will make clergy searches more inclusive

by Nan Cobbey

Parishes and dioceses seeking help from the Church Deployment Office (CDO) to fill vacancies will now receive packets of profiles that include profiles of women, blacks, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Native Americans.

"For a long time the CDO had a policy on equal opportunity and affirmative action," said the Rev. James G. Wilson, executive director of the CDO. "What has changed is the implementation of that policy."

In the past, the CDO would only conduct an affirmative action search--pull profiles of women candidates or minority candidates from its computer files--when a parish or diocese requested it, Wilson said. That didn't help those who felt overlooked.

"Clearly there is a problem. Many women and many members of minority groups report great difficulty in being called to ministries in parishes and feel they have been the victims of discrimination," said Wilson, whose office is located at the Episcopal Church Center. "Now, on our own initiative, we do affirmative action searches as standard operating procedure."

If a search does not turn up candidates in each group, the staff will find additional candidates "that most closely meet the criteria the parish and diocese are looking for," said Wilson.

While admitting that the new procedure cannot end the discrimination so many feel and report to his office, Wilson is optimistic about the move. "I think it helps to communicate a policy at both diocese and parish level...and it models some standards of behavior that, hopefully, will cause some changes."

Wilson has received no complaints about the new searches. "Diocesan representatives...and clergy groups have told me they welcome it."

Wilson said that he believes when vestries focus on the skills they need to do the kind of ministry they are called to do, the issues of race and sex become less important. "I've seen parishes surprise themselves once they discover that the person who best meets their criteria is, for example, a woman. They've surprised themselves by going ahead and hiring that woman."

--Nan Cobby is features editor of *Episcopal Life*.

92163

House of Bishops meeting in Baltimore will emphasize introspection and biblical study

Planners of the upcoming annual interim meeting of the Episcopal Church's House of Bishops in Baltimore, September 4-10, said that meeting will center on Bible study and discussions about the common vision of its members, rather than legislative-style debates of past meetings.

"The meeting in Baltimore will continue to be significantly different from the usual interim meetings," said Bishop Heath Light of Southwestern

Virginia, chair of the planning committee. "We will be addressing concerns in two categories--operational concerns of the house as well as the concerns confronting the world."

"Obviously we are not going to close the door on the world," Light added. "If there are issues that we need to address, we will certainly do so. I think there is a reasonable expectation that we may address racism and the urban crisis," he said. "However, I think the point is that we are not going to try to take positions on all the issues on God's green earth."

The meeting in Baltimore comes six months after a special meeting of the House of Bishops in North Carolina declared its intention to reshape the style of meetings by moving away from confrontation. "We recognized that we must focus upon our communal life as a House of Bishops because it is the source of our identity. We learned that if we cannot be bishops together, we cannot be bishops alone," the bishops said in a statement.

"The meeting in Kanuga was largely applauded by bishops," Light said. "The sense of community was deepened dramatically, and the sense of refreshment and prayer was noticeable. It was an experience we didn't want to lose."

In Baltimore, five scholarly papers on the issue of scriptural authority, along with daily scriptural readings, will provide the basis for small-group discussions throughout the meeting, according to Light. On Thursday, September 10, Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey will participate in the meeting as part of his first official tour of the United States.

[Editors note: For additional information about the House of Bishops meeting in Baltimore, or to request press credentials, contact James Solheim or Jeffrey Penn at the Episcopal News Service at (800) 334-7626 or (212) 922-5385.]

92164

Press Alert:

Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey's first official visit to the U.S. set for September

The first official visit of Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey to the United States will take him across the country and introduce him to a wide range of ministries in the Episcopal Church. At several points along the way he will be available to the press.

September 9

Carey, his wife, Eileen, and several staff members will arrive at Dulles Airport and go directly to Baltimore, Maryland, where they will be special guests during the closing session of the Episcopal Church's House of Bishops meeting at the Hyatt Regency.

September 10

The archbishop will participate with the American bishops in a discussion on authority and use of Scripture, listening to reports from small groups of bishops during their week-long meeting. Carey will respond and engage in a wide-ranging discussion with the bishops in the morning and again in the afternoon. The Carey party will join Bishop Ted Eastman of the Diocese of Maryland and ecumenical guests for dinner that evening.

Carey will hold a press conference at 4:15, following the day's discussions. Press contacts: Jim Solheim and Jeffrey Penn at the Hyatt Regency in Baltimore.

September 11

The archbishop and his party will meet with the clergy of the Dioceses of Maryland, Easton, and Washington at the hotel in Baltimore to discuss issues of evangelism and vocation of the priesthood before departing for Washington.

Carey will participate in a Trinity Lay Institute Teleconference at the Capitol Hilton, delivering an address via satellite to dioceses across the nation and answering questions from participants. Concluding comments by Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning.

Press contact: The Rev. Charles Cesaretti of Trinity Church in New York ([212] 602-9693).

September 12

Carey will travel to the Diocese of Maryland to help them celebrate their 300th anniversary. He will preach at a festival Eucharist at Church of the Redeemer in Baltimore.

He will return to Washington early in the afternoon, may make a brief stop at the White House, and will attend a reception sponsored by Trinity and then dinner with the British ambassador.

September 13

On Sunday morning Carey will attend a Trinity Conference breakfast with Presiding Bishop Browning and then go to Washington National Cathedral at 11, where he will preach. He will be a guest at a lunch for ecumenical guests.

In the afternoon he will join a youth gathering at the cathedral before returning to his hotel.

Press contact: Robert Becker at the cathedral ([202] 537-6249).

September 14

The Carey party will leave Washington for Cincinnati, where they will be welcomed at the airport by Bishop Herbert Thompson of the Diocese of Southern Ohio and the mayor.

There will be a press conference at the airport about 2:15 P.M.
After checking in at the Westin Hotel, Carey will go to Christ Church, where he will participate and preach at a Eucharist.

September 15

At 9:45 Carey will deliver the Charles Taft Memorial Lecture at Christ Church and meet the clergy and lay leaders of the diocese at a reception. At 1:00 P.M. he will leave for Seattle.

Press contact: Michael Barwell ([513] 421-0311).

Arriving in Seattle, the Carey party will be welcomed to the Diocese of Olympia by Bishop Vincent Warner and visit a refugee resettlement center and meet with members of St. Peter's Japanese Church.

At 6:15 Carey will attend a reception at the Westin Hotel hosted by

Church Divinity School of the Pacific and deliver an address at a banquet on the subject of "Evangelism: Religious Longing in an Irreligious Age."

September 16

Carey will go to the Church of the Holy Family in Tacoma and meet with members of the Cambodian congregation. In a meeting with diocesan clergy and lay leaders, Carey will speak about "The Minister: Teacher, Pastor or Prophet?"

At 2:15 Carey will visit Three Cedars, an AIDS hospice sponsored by Christ Church in Tacoma. He will lunch with church leaders and the staff of the hospice.

Mrs. Carey will meet with Episcopal Church Women of the diocese at 10 A.M. at St. Mark's Cathedral.

At 5 P.M. the Careys will meet diocesan staff and then go to St. Mark's Cathedral to meet ecumenical guests and join the congregation for Evensong. In the evening, they will be special guests at a dinner hosted by Bishop and Mrs. Warner.

September 17

The Careys will breakfast with church leaders at the Sorrento Hotel and at 11:15 they will be available for a press interview. At noon they will leave for Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Press contact: Diane Walker ([206] 325-4200)

The Careys will be welcomed to the Diocese of the Rio Grande by Bishop and Mrs. Terence Kelshaw and be guests at a private dinner.

September 18

Carey will meet with clergy of the diocese and Province VII, addressing them on the role of the clergy. At 11 he will meet with ecumenical church leaders and lunch with diocesan and provincial leaders. Mrs. Carey will attend a special luncheon for clergy spouses of the diocese.

At 1:30 the archbishop will give a greeting at the opening of the diocesan convention at the convention center adjacent to the Doubletree Hotel.

At 2:30 he will attend a press conference.

In the afternoon Carey will speak with youth, and he will preach at the convention Eucharist at 6:30. In the evening he will join the diocesan standing committee and council for dinner.

September 19

The Carey party will leave for New York City. In the evening the Careys will be guests at a reception sponsored by the Diocese of New York.

September 20

At 9:30 on Sunday, Carey will attend a short **press conference**, which will precede the 10:30 Eucharist and dedication of Compasrose, the symbol of the Anglican Communion, at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. The archbishop will preach. After lunch he will tour neighborhood youth programs.

At 3:15 Carey will go to General Theological Seminary to attend Evensong. He will receive an honorary degree and preach, joining the seminary community for a reception after the service.

Press contacts: Jim Solheim and Jeffrey Penn (800) 334-7626 or (212) 922-5385.

The Carey party will depart for London, Monday morning, September 21.



news briefs

92165

ESA members move to block confirmation of Dixon

Members of the traditionalist Episcopal Synod of America (ESA) in the Dioceses of Virginia and Southern Virginia have formally petitioned their bishops and standing committees to "withhold their consent to the confirmation of the election" of the Rev. Jane Dixon, selected on May 30 as suffragan bishop of the Diocese of Washington (D.C.). "We believe such confirmation will further polarize [the Episcopal Church] and inhibit the primary concerns of the church...[in] the worship and adoration of God and the propagation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ," the ESA resolution said. The "withhold consent" plea was adopted unanimously at the ESA's Convocation 2B, meeting in June in Richmond. Episcopal bishops-elect need the approval of a majority of the Episcopal Church's 119 diocesan bishops and diocesan standing committees in order to be consecrated. The ESA based its objections, in part, on Dixon's position on the ordination of homosexuals.

New Jubilee ministries are 'centers of change'

Eight new Jubilee Center ministries were affirmed by the Episcopal Church's Executive Council in June. According to Ntsiki Kabane-Langford, staff officer for Jubilee Ministry of the Episcopal Church, the new centers "are all empowering programs--not merely assistance programs." Kabane-Langford said that the current state of poverty, homelessness, drug abuse and hunger "has multiplied the need for community-based centers that have a commitment to change these conditions. With the new Jubilee Centers we increase the voice of the Episcopal Church to advocate for the changes." The new Jubilee Centers are Anchor House in the Diocese of Central Florida, Calvary Jubilee Center in the Diocese of Central New York, St. Mark's Homeless Shelter in the Diocese of Los Angeles, St. Andrew's Day Center in the Diocese of Minnesota, The Greater Minneapolis Interfaith Hospitality in the Diocese of

Minnesota, Rural and Migrant Ministry in the Diocese of New York, St. Laurence Chapel Refugee and Rehabilitation in the Diocese of Southeast Florida, and St. Matthew's House in the Diocese of Southwest Florida. There are 205 Jubilee Centers across the country.

Heistand and Goldwater support gay-rights measure

Former Senator Barry Goldwater, Episcopal Bishop Joseph T. Heistand of Arizona, and other religious and political leaders joined forces in a successful effort to gain passage of a gay-rights ordinance in the Phoenix City Council. The ordinance, passed in July, prohibited discrimination against gays and lesbians in public places and in jobs. Speaking at a news conference prior to the council's vote, Goldwater, known widely for his conservative political views, said, "Under our Constitution, we literally have the right to do anything we may want to do, as long as the performing of those acts do not cause damage or hurt to anybody else. I can't see any way in the world that being gay can cause damage to somebody else," Goldwater added.

British Methodist leader urges involvement in 'wider world'

British Methodists were told by their first woman president that the true arena for exercising God's calling "is in the wider world" beyond the narrow confines of the church. "We suck people into church involvement and only seem to value the time they spend in serving inside it," Kathleen M. Richardson recently told the annual meeting of the Methodist Conference of Great Britain. "Our churches should be...where we can practice the skills that will fit us for mission and caring," Richardson said. "The church should be a healing community, committed to affirming each individual and helping them achieve full potential." She cited involvement in justice issues, concern for the needy, and environmental stewardship as "Gospel calls that we cannot ignore."

NCC leader calls for Marshall Plan for U.S. cities

Following a tour of riot-torn South Central Los Angeles, representatives of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the National Council of Churches (NCC) said that they would begin lobbying political leaders for a Marshall Plan to aid urban areas in the United States. "The challenge to us is, we have listened and it's now up to us to respond," said the Rev. Joan Brown Campbell, general secretary of the NCC. Campbell said that the NCC and WCC envisioned a plan that includes employment training, infrastructure rebuilding and efforts to combat racism.

Relations strained between Copts and Muslims in Egypt

Violence continues to flair in Egypt between Muslim fundamentalists and Christian Copts, with prospects for reconciliation dimming due to mutual distrust and a lack of communication. In Cairo on June 15, Muslim extremists shot dead a prominent writer who had criticized them. Clashes have recently occurred elsewhere in Cairo and in the southern cities of Fayum and Beni Suef. In speeches and leaflets, the Gamaat Islamiya (Islamic Groups), viewed as more militant than the increasingly mainstream Muslim Brotherhood, have pointedly called for a "return to Islam" and the imposition of strict Islamic law upon both Muslims and Copts. Copts number five to six million of the 58 million Egyptians.

Berkeley imposes tax on church contributions

Berkeley, California, city officials have imposed a tax on church contributions, saying their move is a more consistent application of a tax already applied to other nonprofit organizations. But church leaders reacted with anger to the city directive, which called for churches to get business licenses and to pay an annual tax of 60 cents on every \$1,000 in contributions. "They are trying to tell me I have to get a city license to preach," said the Rev. Elvin Baker, Jr., pastor of the 300-member Ollie Grove Baptist Church. The Rev. Robert Rasmussen, executive minister of the American Baptist Churches of the West, pointed out that churches feed the hungry, thereby "taking the burden...off the city." Berkeley's Director of Finance Sonali Bose defended the city's decision by saying, "The city has two choices. It can exclude all [nonprofit organizations] from the ordinance, or it includes nonprofits and then it has to tax churches as well." Bose estimated that half of Berkeley's nonprofit organizations are currently registered with the city.

Resource being prepared for outreach to baby boomers

An Episcopal Church task force focusing on evangelism and ministry to non-affiliated "baby boomers" expects to have the draft of an outreach manuscript ready for December distribution. The task force, headed by the Rev. Linda Grenz and the Rev. Wayne Schwab of the Episcopal Church Center in New York, is shaping the resource to aid congregations in their outreach to the largest segment of the U.S. population, born between 1946 and 1964. The resource authors will expand on work done by Robert Paul and Kirk McNeil of the United Methodist Church. In the view of Paul and McNeil, baby boomers are centered on self-fulfillment rather than the self-denial that characterized their parents, tend toward short-term commitments,

seek a clear Christian basis for their daily living, and look for clergy leaders whose "insides match their outsides."

Australian urges autonomous bishops for subcultures

An Australian author has stirred controversy by arguing that different cultural and subcultural groups should be afforded autonomous bishops in order to more effectively realize the groups' spiritual needs. Dr. Allen Brent, senior lecturer in history at James Cook University in North Queensland, said in his recently published book, *Cultural Episcopacy and Ecumenism*, that traditionalist and feminist subcultures should also have their own bishops. Brent maintained that the prevailing organizational structure of churches reflects "[medieval] European views...that are imperialistic and autocratic."

Not your average church picnic

The soup kitchen at the landmark Holy Apostles Episcopal Church in New York City served 1,206 meals for hungry and homeless New Yorkers during its celebration of July 4. Volunteers and servers prepared 600 pounds of beef patties, 265 hamburger buns, 150 pounds of American cheese, 180 pounds of tomatoes, 7 gallons each of ketchup, mustard and mayonnaise, 565 pounds of potato salad, 75 gallons of baked beans, 75 gallons of fruit salad, 150 gallons of lemonade and 60 gallons of assorted flavors of ice cream. Despite a devastating fire that destroyed much of the church building two years ago, Holy Apostles continues to operate the largest soup kitchen in the Episcopal Church and the city of New York, serving nearly 1,000 persons each weekday throughout the year.

After 30 years, U.S. relief supplies reach Cuba by air

On July 2, for the first time in 30 years, a nongovernmental cargo plane from the United States landed in Cuba, carrying 71,000 pounds of relief supplies. The DC8 airplane, containing food, medicines, health kits and soap for the Cuban Ecumenical Council, was chartered by the Church World Service, the relief and development arm of the U.S. National Council of Churches (NCC). "When the first crate came out of the belly of the Aeronaves del Peru plane, people broke into applause and cheers," said the Rev. Oscar Bolloli, Latin American director of the NCC. Church members were on hand to unload the plane, and the supplies were distributed to hospitals and church-run retirement centers. Additional supplies will be delivered as soon as funds become available, Bolloli said, and will be shipped free of charge by ABC Charters of Miami. The next lot of medicines is scheduled for the Juan Marquez Children's Hospital, where, according to Dr.

Noemi Gorriñ, a physician at the hospital, a recent shipment of medicines saved the lives of 10 children. Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian and Pentecostal churches participate in the Cuban Ecumenical Council.

Nashotah House accreditation affirmed

Nashotah House was affirmed as a fully accredited seminary by the accrediting commission of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS) following an ATS investigation. The investigation was prompted by charges filed last November by three former faculty members of the seminary who alleged serious deficiencies in the seminary's program and academic climate. In welcoming the commission's action, Dean Gary W. Kriss of Nashotah House said, "The commission has reaffirmed not only our accreditation but the essential integrity of Nashotah House.... Those who have sought to question and undermine our integrity as a seminary must now be silent." The ATS commission also applauded the seminary's recent efforts to recruit a larger student body, to ensure a climate of intellectual openness and to establish institutional machinery to respond to women's concerns.

Church Women United set new five-year priorities

The Church Women United (CWU) Common Council established its priorities for the next five years when representatives from some 24 denominations and all 50 states, Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C., convened in Los Angeles, June 24-29. The new CWU priorities are to economically empower women in order to ameliorate poverty among women and children; to press for a comprehensive national health-care program; to examine the interrelationship among health, environmental and women's issues; to revitalize local CWU organizations, in part by integrating local and state units into the national organization's planning and evaluation process; and to develop a more effective communications strategy. In order to move toward these objectives, CWU adopted a \$1.5-million budget and set the goal of a \$2.5-million budget by 1996. Based in New York City, CWU is a national movement of Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox women for prayer, advocacy and service.

If searching for saints, 'go South'

Spurred by the desire to determine how many among us might qualify for the lofty title of "saint," George Gallup, Jr., conducted a poll in March 1988, posing 12 qualifying questions to the 1,052 Americans surveyed. The questions included attitudes toward prayer, forgiveness and helping others in

need. The results: 13 percent of Americans are saints, with nonwhite, low-income women in the South being the most likely candidates. Follow-up interviews were conducted with the highest scorers, and have been fashioned into a book, *The Saints Among Us* (Morehouse), by Gallup and Timothy Jones, associate editor of the evangelical monthly *Christianity Today*. The authors said that, contrary to popular expectations, those who met the criteria for saintliness were very much of this world--people who "seem planted firmly in the gritty substance of everyday life."

New communications network proposed for churchwide use

A plan to establish a new communications network for the Episcopal Church has been proposed to the deans of U.S. Episcopal cathedrals by Trinity Church in New York and the telecommunications staff of the Episcopal Church Center. Proponents of the Episcopal Cathedral Teleconferencing Network (ECTN), as the plan is known, said the proposal addresses churchwide communication and educational needs and would help restore cathedrals as centers of religious and cultural discourse. The plan's backers emphasized that teleconferencing, or "conversation" by means of satellite, is a reliable, cost-effective new mode of communication. Trinity Church's television studio acquired teleconferencing capacity several months ago.

Episcopalians prominent in Los Angeles gay pride parade

Over 200 members of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles were among the 200,000 marchers at the West Hollywood gay pride parade on June 28. The Rt. Rev. Chester L. Talton, the diocese's suffragan bishop, became the first leader of a mainline denomination to participate in the annual event. The parade is California's largest after the Tournament of Roses Parade and the Hollywood Christmas Parade. In speaking of what he saw as the group's primary motivation for participating, the Rev. William McCord Thigpen, Diocesan Bishop Frederick H. Borsch's liaison to the gay and lesbian community, said, "There are many, many gay and lesbian people who have been spiritually damaged by their families and by the church who are in desperate need of knowing something of God's incredible grace and love."

Field for new WCC leader narrowed to three

A search committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC) has narrowed to three its search for a successor to WCC General Secretary Emilio Castro, who will retire on December 31. Invited to the committee's final round of interviews, August 15-17, are David Martin Conway, 56, president of Selly Oak Colleges in Birmingham, England, and a member of the Church

of England; the Rev. Dr. Christopher Duraisingh, 54, interim convener of the WCC's Program Unit II (Mission, Education and Witness) and a member of the Church of South India; and the Rev. Dr. Konrad Raiser, 54, professor of Protestant theology at Ruhr University in Bochum, Germany, and a member of the Evangelical Church in Germany. The WCC Central Committee will elect the new general secretary on August 24.

Holy Eucharist translated into Hawaiian

The Commission on Hawaiian Ministry of the Episcopal Church in Hawaii has published Rites I and II of the Holy Eucharist in Hawaiian, with English on facing pages. "The commission feels that the publication of this translation is timely, coinciding with a resurgence of interest in the Hawaiian community in learning and using our mother tongue on a daily basis as a living language," said the Rev. Charles Hopkins, commission chair. The Church of England's Book of Common Prayer was first translated into Hawaiian in 1863, and the last Hawaiian translation of the English Prayer Book was issued in 1883.

Religious equality accord signed in Spain

Spain's 300,000 Protestants, 200,000 Muslims and 15,000 Jews gained equal legal standing with the nation's Roman Catholics at the end of April, when representatives of the minority communities signed an agreement with Spanish Justice Minister Tomas de la Quadra. De la Quadra said that the accords signified "an effective pluralism, tolerance and openness." The accords, covering such areas as the status of clergy, taxation, and religious services in public education, marked an end to five centuries of Roman Catholic domination of church-state relations in Spain.

PEOPLE

The Rt. Rev. Richard Holloway, 58, the new primate of the Scottish Episcopal Church, was unanimously elected at St. Andrew's Cathedral in Aberdeen on June 19. A former rector at the Church of the Advent in Boston, Massachusetts, and bishop of Edinburgh since 1986, Holloway succeeds the Rt. Rev. George Henderson, who recently retired. Holloway has been a directing influence within the Affirming Catholicism group and is a strong supporter of the ordination of women priests, which he reportedly expects to happen in the Scottish church "within the next two years."

Ann B. Garvin of Topeka, Kansas, was installed as president of Church Women United (CWU) on June 29 at the CWU Common Council meeting in Los Angeles, and **Van Lynch** of Trimble, Tennessee, was installed as CWU first vice president. Garvin, a former public high school math teacher, is a member of the St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church in Topeka, and owns a consulting company. She succeeds Patricia Rumer as president. Van Lynch, a Presbyterian, is a Native American of the Choctaw tribe. CWU is a national organization of Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox women.

The Rt. Rev. Craig Barry Anderson, bishop of South Dakota since 1984, was elected the eleventh dean and president of the General Theological Seminary (GTS), the Episcopal Church's oldest seminary. Anderson, 50, was chosen at a special meeting of the New York-based seminary's board of trustees on July 14. In hailing Anderson's election, the Rev. C. Hugh Hildesley, chair of the GTS Search Committee, said, "Craig Anderson embodies the qualities we were looking for in a new dean: leadership in theology and worship, a vision for the seminary, skills in fundraising and recruitment, and experience in management and administration--with a proven ability and enthusiasm to communicate all of the above." Anderson received his master of divinity degree from the University of the South's School of Theology in 1975, and was later a professor of pastoral theology there. He also received a Ph.D. degree from Vanderbilt University in 1986. He will succeed the Very Rev. James C. Fenhagen, whose resignation as GTS dean and president becomes effective August 31.

The Rev. Dr. Erica Brown Wood assumed the post of president and warden of the College of Preachers on June 18, after serving as interim president of the Washington, D.C.-based institution since May 1991. The college, a ministry of the Washington National Cathedral, is an interdenominational center of continuing education for those called to the ministry of preaching. Prior to coming to the college, Wood was associate rector of Trinity Memorial Church in Binghamton, New York. She was ordained to the priesthood in 1988, after earning her master of divinity degree from Colgate Rochester Divinity School. Wood also holds an interdisciplinary Ph.D. degree in economics and sociology from Syracuse University.

The Rev. Martin G. Townsend was elected the ninth bishop of the Diocese of Easton on the third ballot of a special diocesan convention, July 11. Townsend, 48, is currently rector of Christ Church, Blacksburg, Virginia. He will serve as bishop coadjutor until the Rt. Rev. Elliott L. Sorge, the

incumbent bishop, retires early next year. Born in Cambridge, England, Townsend came to the United States at the age of 14. He took his master of divinity degree at the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, where he is now studying for a doctorate.

Margaret M. Jacoby, former editor of the diocesan newspaper in the Diocese of Dallas, died at age 89 on July 15. Jacoby and her husband, Henry Jacoby, were charter members of a diocesan mission that grew into St. Michael and All Angels Church in Dallas, a parish now numbering over 5,000 members. She served the Diocese of Dallas for 33 years, most recently as archivist and historiographer.

Photos available for this issue of ENS:

1. Browning serves lunch during tour of black ministries (92153)
2. Browning hails South Carolina's leadership on black leadership (92153)
3. Browning and black clergy meet with Chicago mayor (92153)
4. Browning tours National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis (92153)
5. Integrity meeting fosters dialogue with presiding bishop (92154)
6. Community investment programs rehabilitate neighborhoods (92167)
7. New Chinese minister proclaims the benediction (92168)

If you would like to purchase a photo for \$25 each, contact the Episcopal News Service at (800) 334-7626, extension 5384.

Tentative mailing dates for future ENS releases are August 19 and September 16.



news features

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Community investment--lending from the head and the heart

by Sue Pierce

Maria Colon lives in the Kensington section of Philadelphia, an area suffering many of the same problems that ignited the recent riots in South Central Los Angeles. Drug peddling and addiction, racial division, unemployment and poverty are neighbors to most of the residents. For many in struggling, inner-city neighborhoods, owning a home or business is a part of the American dream that will not come true.

In 1986, Colon moved to Kensington and wanted to buy a home for herself and her three children. "Why should I continue to pay other people's mortgages?" Colon asked herself at the time. "If people own their homes, they feel more involved in their neighborhood," she added. "It helps the children, too--it lets them know that change is possible, that things can improve."

However, since Colon was only employed part-time, "there was no way any bank would consider me for a loan," she recalled. Then she heard about United Hands Community Land Trust, a community group that helps residents who are usually not eligible for conventional bank loans buy and rehabilitate homes.

Colon, who became involved in United Hands first as a volunteer and was recently elected president, bought her own home last year after two-and-a-half years of hard work and help from United Hands. The purchase represented a chain of goodwill, sweat, and brain power that included financial investments by a variety of organizations, including the Episcopal Diocese of

Pennsylvania. The result was not only a new home for Colon, but proof that dreams can come true.

A way 'to lasso private capital'

United Hands has received 21 loans from the Delaware Valley Community Reinvestment Fund (DVCRF), an organization in partnership with the Episcopal Community Investment Program (ECIP) in the Diocese of Pennsylvania. Founded in 1985 and based in Philadelphia, DVCRF is a community-based financial institution that provides low-interest loans and technical assistance to community organizations.

Ashley Hulsey, director of resources, said that community development loan funds serve as financial intermediaries that borrow capital and lend it in lower-income communities to support nonprofit rental housing, community-based businesses, home ownership and community development generally.

"It was clear that no amount of philanthropy was going to rebuild the inner cities," said Hulsey in an interview. "Lack of credit perpetuates poverty. There had to be a way to lasso private capital. There is this incredible need for affordable capital, and there's a bunch of private capital. Organizations like ours bring them together and give people confidence and show that it's possible to lend from the head as well as the heart."

The long-term, low-interest loans go to grassroots community groups that don't usually have access to conventional credit sources such as bank loans because these groups are considered bad credit risks. Hulsey said that DVCRF's carefully structured program gives confidence to lenders, who are individuals and institutions investing anywhere from \$1,000 to \$1 million. The long-term investments (usually five years or more) build homes, maintain vital social services, and expand community-based businesses. Depending on the terms of the loan, lenders currently earn from 3 to 4 percent interest on the loans (rates are competitive with some traditional investments).

The impetus for the diocese to become involved in community reinvestment grew out of the 1988 Michigan Plan, adopted by the Episcopal Church's 1988 General Convention in Detroit. The plan called for "a ministry of community investment and economic justice directed to community-controlled economic development programs of the disadvantaged, with a special focus on land trusts, housing cooperatives, worker-owned businesses and community development credit unions," and urged the church at every level "to utilize, where possible, its buildings, properties, personnel, financial resources and moral power in pursuit of this ministry."

Hulsey said that a working group from the diocese came to her

organization after deciding that "the Michigan Plan wasn't going to implement itself."

Recommitting to the future

The Rev. James Trimble, rector of Christ Church, a prominent parish within walking distance of Independence Hall in Philadelphia, was part of that working group. "When the Michigan Plan was passed, it was like saying, 'Hey, we've got to do something to help people who are economically down get economically up.'" Trimble said. "Nothing much happened until some of us in the diocese decided we would raise \$1 million in the first year and invest it with DVCRF because they have the expertise." Trimble's parish became a major investor, pledging \$100,000.

The \$1 million was quickly raised, and when Bishop of Pennsylvania Allen L. Bartlett, Jr., announced the investment at a press conference in 1990, he called it "a commitment of faith in the Philadelphia region...a way of recommitting ourselves to the future of the Delaware Valley."

Bishop Bartlett backed the partnership from the start. "I got really excited about the partnership because it was a way in which the church can make a continuing difference," said Bartlett. "It's not just words; it's a resolve to change areas that need to be changed by supporting self-help." He added that ECIP is looking to raise \$5 million by 1996.

Hulsey said that she sees it as an important step that the diocese wanted to work with her organization. "Too often the church excels at recreating things that already exist," she remarked. As an Episcopalian and the daughter of Bishop Sam Hulsey of Northwest Texas, Hulsey is wise to the ways of the church. She said that the diocesan group sought out a partnership with DVCRF because it wanted to take advantage of DVCRF's successful community reinvestment operation.

One of the reasons that DVCRF inspires confidence in lenders, said Hulsey, is that the organization "has a flawless lending record--we have loaned out over \$7 million since 1986 and haven't lost any money or even had a late payment."

Best vehicle for renewal

To date, investments by Episcopalians have reached almost \$2 million, nearly a third of DVCRF's total loan pool. The diocese committed \$500,000 from an endowment, and the bishop made an investment from his discretionary fund. So far, these funds have helped finance 145 units of low-income housing--like the home for Maria Colon--and loans have been made to community groups so that they can maintain vital services in times of cash-

flow crisis.

Hulsey said that the role of the church is crucial in rebuilding communities. "Within severely depressed neighborhoods, the church is often the only viable institution left, and the best vehicle for renewal," she said.

The community reinvestment movement started in the 1960s and 70s. The movement really began to expand in the 1980s when the inner cities began to rapidly decline as federal support dried up.

One of the members of ECIP, Martin Paul Trimble, said that going with DVCRF made the most sense because an intermediary is very important in the process. "Many churches lost their shirts in the 1960s by doing direct lending," he noted.

Trimble is also executive director of the National Association of Community Development Loan Funds (NACDLF), which is based in Philadelphia. NACDLF is a group of 42 community reinvestment organizations from across the United States, of which DVCRF is one. According to Trimble, NACDLF has \$88 million in capital--23 percent of that is investments from religious groups.

Trimble's organization has a partnership with the Episcopal Church on a national scale, also as a result of the Michigan Plan. "The national church wanted to provide leadership for local efforts, so the Executive Council approved \$7 million from church trust funds for implementing the Michigan Plan."

The church's Committee for Economic Justice Implementation invested \$1.5 million in NACDLF, said Trimble. "Our charge was to put it into our member groups on their behalf. They told us that it would be very exciting to use their investments as a challenge fund, to go out to the local community and say, 'If you help us raise money, we can get matching funds from the Episcopal Church.'"

"These challenge loans have been tremendously successful," said Trimble. "In Vermont, we gave the Vermont Community Loan Fund \$50,000 and challenged them to raise another \$50,000. They went to the diocese and the parishes and raised it. Then they got another \$50,000 and matched that." In the end, said Trimble, the Vermont fund was able to raise \$230,000 from the national church and local parishes. "The national church grants give our members the chance to go out and talk to local churches," said Trimble.

More than words

Hulsey agreed that getting people to talk about their money and their faith is very important. "If people have faith and believe in justice, then they need to put their money where their mouth is. It would be very simple for

wealthy churches to use their endowments or building funds for community reinvestment."

"It's a matter of justice, helping human beings be the best that they can be and live up to their full potential," said the Rev. James Trimble as he reflected on his parish's involvement. "It is a kind of witness to what the church can do."

Bartlett agreed that it is important for the church to witness in this way, and he will continue to promote community reinvestment in the diocese and will broaden his efforts to network with other denominations to bring them on board. "These investments are more than just words; they are undergirded by a moral fabric that has its foundation in a Gospel that is for all, not just for the privileged."

In helping rebuild communities, said Bartlett, "rather than simply cursing the darkness, it's even more than just lighting a candle; it's hooking up the electricity."

—Sue Pierce, formerly with *Witness* magazine, is a freelance writer in Philadelphia.

92167

Chinese Christians coping with vitality and growth

by David A. Willis

It was a slow Sunday in Shanghai. One church baptized 80 people at one of its three morning services and another 70 that afternoon. That same church baptized 6,000 new Christians last year, but by the time of our visit in June, it had already surpassed that number. (There is a vitality sweeping the church in China that is difficult for visitors to understand.)

Our group from the Diocese of Rochester visited China because of a suggestion made back in the mid-1980s that it was time for the church in the United States to foster links and friendship.

Richard Henshaw, former editor of the diocesan newspaper, was

encouraged by Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning to see if the diocese could become a "window for the American Church on China." In 1987, the two of them led a small delegation to China. The following year, Browning asked Bishop William Burrill of Rochester to strengthen the bond with Bishop K.H. Ting, president of the China Christian Council, at the Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops meeting in England.

The bond was further strengthened when several Chinese bishops and a pastor visited the diocese and Burrill led a return visit during Holy Week and Easter of 1990. Our group of 21 was just the latest installment in the growing relationship.

Open attitude towards religion

When our delegation met with Bishop Ting at the Nanjing Theological Seminary, he had just returned from a visit to North America, meeting with church leaders in New York and preaching in various Canadian cities.

Ting speaks with some assurance about the current relationship between the ruling Communist Party and the church's Three-Self Movement (self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating). "We in the church have not felt it our duty to adopt an attitude of confrontation with the government," he said. "Instead, we see the need for dialogue and discussion. It is our job to coexist with the government; we are not anti-government."

Ting's colleague, Bishop Shen Yifan, reported that the current government has a "more open attitude towards religion. They wish to modernize China, and they realize that to do that they must allow more freedom to believe."

Shen Yifan also feels that it is the duty of the church to make comments on the actions of the government "when we have feelings as to what should or should not be done. We support the government when they are right," he said.

A growing church

When asked why the Chinese church is growing with such vigor, both bishops had theories. Shen Yifan said that part of it was in reaction to the repression of religion during the decade-long Cultural Revolution, which ended in 1976. While attracted by the high-sounding slogans, people were "disillusioned when the statements did not come true. Everyone has something deep within that cannot be satisfied by material things," he continued. "Our job in the church is to awaken our people."

"Human beings seek love," added Bishop Ting. "We all need love, to love and be loved. Since society does not give such love, that is our job.

And if we disappoint people and fail to show them that love, they will leave us."

Leadership for the growing church continues to be a major problem. Last January the church ordained 45 clergy in a single service in Beijing, but there are only about a thousand clergy to serve a church with 6 to 7 million members. And a new congregation is established every 16 hours somewhere in China.

The average age of seminarians in China is just over 22, compared with 37 in the United States. The church is caught in a race to prepare the next round of leaders. Like the Communist Party, most of the church's leaders are older men. Bishop Ting, for example, was consecrated an Anglican bishop in 1955. The devastations of the Cultural Revolution destroyed two entire generations of potential leaders.

Role of women growing

The role of women in the church is growing stronger. A woman from Inner Mongolia, for example, was among those ordained in January. Her home area has been opposed to women in the clergy, yet today she is running a training program for elders for the entire area.

When asked if the Chinese church might soon consecrate a woman bishop, Ting said that it was unlikely, but for reasons that are peculiar to the Chinese scene. "There are those in our church who think having bishops is a return to Anglicanism. And they are very sensitive to the restoration of any sort of denominationalism," he said. In fact, he said that he thinks that he and two other bishops are likely to be the last bishops in the Chinese church "for quite some time. I think we were named bishop as a gesture to those in our church who were once Anglicans."

The church now has 13 theological schools, with an enrollment of 800 students. The only national seminary is in Nanjing, but there are five regional seminaries plus a number of smaller seminaries around the nation to prepare lay people to support the ordained clergy.

Bishop Ting compared the young seminarians and clergy in China with the famed "barefoot doctors" that brought health care to the people. "Because our clergy are so few and so young, we rely heavily on the leadership of the elders in our churches. Our young clergy are eager--but it takes time for them to find their place in the church."

Anyone who fails to be moved by the joyous growth of the Chinese church, their easy acceptance of the demands of evangelism, simply is ignoring the obvious. The question we frequently asked our hosts was, "How do you do it?" What seemed like an incredible accomplishment to Western

eyes often puzzled the Chinese. They would reply to our questions by simply stating, "We're only behaving the way Christ taught us to behave. Other than that, we're not doing anything special."

92168

Part I in a series

Dioceses trying to cope with health insurance headaches

by David Skidmore

Most headaches go away with time, but not the nation's health-care migraine. The skyrocketing cost of health care--projected to hit \$817 billion this year--is forcing insurance companies to jack up premiums and employers to pass more of the cost on to employees or trim benefits.

This crisis is no stranger to the Episcopal Church either. In urban dioceses where medical costs run high, the annual premium for an insured and his or her family can approach \$10,000. The problem has also struck the rural dioceses. In Montana, premiums surged 24 percent this year, and in West Virginia, they shot up 32 percent. Battered by double-digit rate increases, many dioceses are responding by upping deductibles, placing tighter strictures on treatment--particularly elective surgery and mental health care, requesting the insured to share premium costs, and, in several cases, opting out of the church's health plan.

The Diocese of Los Angeles is among those bailing out. Faced with a 32-percent jump in its premiums, Los Angeles this January pulled out of the Church Insurance Company's plan--the Episcopal Church Clergy and Employees' Benefit Trust--replacing it with a comparable Blue Cross and Blue Shield plan that boosted premiums half as much.

"Our experience there [with the church's plan] was very poor," said Peter Mann, administrator for the diocese. With the church plan, the diocese was swamped with claims, he said. "There were no controls."

Breaking with Benefit Trust was difficult, said Mann, since the diocese had been with the program since its inception in 1979. But with claims

outpacing premiums--a 42-percent increase over premiums last year--a change was needed. "We made it reluctantly, but we had to do it."

Not all bad news

Not all dioceses are feeling the sting of higher premiums. Rates for the Diocese of New York, insured through the Benefit Trust, remained unchanged from 1991, as did those for the Diocese of Maryland enrolled with Blue Cross and Blue Shield.

Some rates did soar, said Michael Shenk, senior administrator for the Benefit Trust, but not nearly as much as was rumored. "If you look at the group as a whole, a good third had no increase at all. This idea that everybody is going up 20 to 30 percent is not true."

Even for those that did sustain drastic hikes, such as the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast, the reaction is often as much relief as exasperation. Last year Central Gulf Coast generated nearly \$90,000 more in claims than it paid in premiums, prompting the Benefit Trust to bump this year's premiums by 32 percent--the maximum allowed under the trust's plan. Yet Vince Currie, the diocese's administrative officer, isn't complaining.

"We were glad to get it, frankly," Currie said. "The company probably lost about \$150,000 on us. Our premiums should have gone up about 85 percent."

The diocese looked at Blue Cross and Blue Shield, said Currie, but its coverage "wasn't even close" to what they had with the church's plan. In fact, he said, the diocese couldn't even find a company willing to give it a quote.

Like other dioceses, Central Gulf Coast is searching for ways to contain costs. But options are limited. Five years ago the diocese approved a premium participation plan calling for the insured to pay 15 percent of their annual premiums. Churches went along with it for three months but then caved in to pressure from clergy who felt it went against the spirit of their job agreements. Now, only diocesan staff are levied the 15 percent.

The common denominator behind the premium hikes, said Shenk, is an increase in claims, up 17 percent last year. But that rate isn't out of line with the rest of the industry, he noted. In 1991, health claims nationwide rose 12.1 percent, and in 1990, they jumped 21.6 percent.

Aging clergy population driving up costs

Over the long term, said Shenk, the church's plan has actually done better at controlling claims than the industry as a whole. Liberty Life Insurance Company, the claims administrator for the Benefit Trust, reported that claims under the health plan increased by 65 percent to 70 percent

between 1983 and 1991, whereas claims for the rest of the industry during that time went up by 250 percent, he noted.

A big factor in the increases, said Shenk, is an aging clergy population. Most seminary graduates were in their 20s in the 1950s and 60s. But today a sizable share are in their 40s and 50s. The result is not only more claims, but costlier claims. "Having five major heart problems in a particular diocese can wreak havoc with their claims," Shenk said.

As to neglecting cost controls, Shenk said that the trust has taken a number of steps, among them emphasis on second opinions, stricter guidelines for lab tests, and increased use of third parties for care management. For example, all substance abuse and mental health treatment is managed by Preferred Health Care, a private, Connecticut-based firm. The trust has also contracted with two other firms to precertify inpatient hospitalization and provide mail-order prescriptions.

Single versus married clergy

Sky-high costs and claims are also threatening to become a deciding factor in parishes' employment decisions. With premiums typically two to three times higher for family coverage than for single coverage, vestries may be tempted to disregard clergy with spouses and children. "Frankly, it's more economical to have a celibate priest, or a priest who doesn't have children to insure, than it does to have a priest with children," said Idaho's Bishop John Thornton.

Over two thirds of Idaho's 33 churches average just 75 members, and for these congregations, Thornton said, single or spouse-only clergy stand out on the balance sheet over clergy with family.

Although Connecticut's bishop would likely block a clergy call based on family status, said Jack Spaeth, diocesan director of administration and finance, a priest's family ties remain a concern for vestries. "Subconsciously do parishes think about that?" Spaeth asked. "I suppose they do."

That's the predicament facing St. Andrew's parish in Destin, Florida. This year the Central Gulf Coast congregation will be paying \$12,000 in premiums for its two clergy. Next year that will be compounded when their six lay employees are added to the pension and health plans. "We are staring at having to come to grips with some very serious financial realities," said the Rev. Mike Hesse, rector for the 700-member congregation.

The parish is coping with the added pension cost but hasn't yet found a fix for the additional health coverage. "Right now it's still in the abstract. Reality has not struck yet," said Hesse.

Smaller congregations, Hesse said, are the most at risk. "Vestries might

opt to replace full-time employees with part-timers in order to come under the 1,000-hour standard imposed by the equalization resolution, or perhaps lay off their parish secretaries, leaving their rectors to shoulder all the administration.

The solution is not apt to be one of financial wizardry, said Hesse. "What I finally have to believe is that God is in charge and he will take care of us."

--David Skidmore is a member of Episcopal Communicators who is currently a freelance journalist in Chicago.

[Next in this two-part series: Several dioceses are turning to health maintenance organizations (HMOs) as a way to trim insurance costs.]

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Part II in a series

Some dioceses turn to HMOs as saviors from high insurance costs

by David Skidmore

As health-care costs surge out of sight, Los Angeles and other dioceses have turned to managed care as a way to stem the tide. Their tool of choice is the health maintenance organization, or HMO, an option not offered by the Episcopal Church Clergy and Employees' Benefit Trust.

An HMO keeps costs low by negotiating patient volume discounts with hospitals, and contracting with physicians on fee-for-service or salary basis. Unlike an indemnity plan such as Benefit Trust, which lets the insured choose the provider and facility, an HMO restricts its members to physicians and hospitals in its network.

Instead of prenegotiating fees, indemnity plans pay the bill after the fact, so long as charges are "usual and customary" for the locale--a vague phrase that may explain why indemnity programs last year cost Americans on average 17 percent more than the HMOs.

Despite some drawbacks--tighter standards for referrals, penalties for

treatment outside the plan--HMOs remain popular, having doubled their enrollment since 1985.

Not a magic cure

According to Michael Shenk, senior administrator of the Benefit Trust, an HMO might be an option for the trust's insured in a few years. Church Alliance--a consortium of 26 denominations that lobbies Congress on health and pension issues--is exploring the feasibility of creating an HMO and will make a recommendation later this year. But HMOs are not a magic cure, he noted.

"HMOs are a cost-containment method, but they are also a hard sell. It's a very tough balancing act," Shenk said.

That has been the experience in the Diocese of California. Since 1988, the San Francisco Bay Area diocese has offered its 500 insured employees the option of enrolling in two HMOs as an alternative to the Benefit Trust plan. This three-tiered approach has lowered the diocese's claims, and consequently held this year's premiums to a 10-percent increase, but has also resulted in an age disparity among the programs, said Caroline Talbot, the diocese's employee benefits coordinator.

Despite the higher premiums, said Talbot, "we have found that older employees used to having a free choice of doctors [have been] sticking with that plan tenaciously. We've found that younger families, though, are willing to go with the HMOs."

While there has been talk of going exclusively with HMOs, most realize it's not practical, Talbot said. But that means the Benefit Trust plan premiums are going to continue their steep climb, given that the trust is the conduit for the costliest treatment, she added. "It's not going to be able to take these older employees and supply the same coverage," said Talbot.

The Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast's 115 lay and ordained insured would probably welcome the chance to enroll in an HMO, said diocesan administrator Vince Currie, as "they're absolutely wore out over these high premiums." But in a diocese that stretches from northwest Florida to the Mississippi-Alabama border, it would prove impractical. Given that many towns lack hospitals or even doctors, Currie said, "I think it would be almost an administrative impossibility to put together an HMO that would cater to 60 different locations."

The Diocese of Connecticut offers an HMO in its plan but because of older insured and costlier treatment, it is in the unenviable position of having the most expensive premiums in the church--\$9,408 for family coverage. The average age of their insured is 53, about 10 years over the norm, said Jack

Spaeth, diocesan director of administration and finance. And added to that is the increased use of expensive technology like CAT scans and magnetic resonance imaging.

"Not only has the cost increased, but utilization has increased," Spaeth said. "And that throws the cost out of whack."

'Who picks up the tab?'

The good news is that for the first time in a long while claims haven't outstripped premiums. Against claims of \$1.6 million, the Diocese of Connecticut last year paid \$1.9 million in premiums. It was the opposite story in 1989 and 1990, during which the diocese generated an average of \$250,000 more in claims than it paid in premiums.

"You don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure if you have a dollar coming in premiums and two dollars going out in claims, you're going to be out of money real quick," said Spaeth. As a result, the diocese took the risky step in 1990 of self-insuring its health plan. They chose that route even though the Church Insurance plan would have cost less, said Spaeth.

"The Church Insurance Company could give us a lower premium, but they are pushing that cost onto other dioceses," said Spaeth. "Our concern in the long haul was who picks up that tab?"

The practice of spreading a member's claim cost that goes above a certain threshold over the entire insured pool is fairly standard, according to Church Insurance officials. For dioceses enrolled in the Benefit Trust, the amount in excess of \$25,000 for any individual claim is not counted against that diocese in calculating premiums, but prorated so that no one diocese is laden with exorbitant premiums.

That keeps the playing field level, admitted Spaeth, but ignores the issue of cost containment--a key factor in his diocese's decision to pull out of the Benefit Trust in 1985. Controlling costs is a big part of Connecticut's program. Two years ago the diocese decided to move toward a \$500 deductible. They've been doing it in increments and are now at \$350.

Other measures include requiring a second opinion in surgical situations, encouraging outpatient lab tests for elective hospital treatment, limiting coverage to 50 percent for patients admitted to hospitals on weekends for elective treatment, and using an Aetna employee assistance program to screen applicants for outpatient mental health care.

The controls have put a brake on claims but have had little effect on premiums, admitted Spaeth. In fact, despite these efforts, the diocese has had to raise its rates by 5 percent.

Although Connecticut parted ways with Church Insurance over lax cost

controls, the diocese hasn't written off a chance to rejoin the plan. New leadership at the Church Insurance Company, notably the appointment of Alan Blanshard as president, has prompted the diocese to initiate a dialogue with the company, said Spaeth. "We hope someday to be back in relationship with them."

Benefits in the traditional plan

While there are weaknesses in the Benefit Trust plan, said Shenk, there are also some significant advantages. The waiting period for preexisting conditions is fairly liberal: six months before benefits begin for the insured, and 12 months for their dependents. And for newly ordained clergy, the waiting period is waived. Another plus is the cap on premium rate adjustments--usually in the neighborhood of 30 percent.

In addition, the administrative burden is light: The trust's work force has only four full-time staff members, including Shenk. Consequently, only 9 percent of premiums goes to cover administrative costs versus the industry standard of 15 to 25 percent.

For Shenk the real test has been the support of the dioceses: only 14 of the church's 100 domestic dioceses are not enrolled in the trust. For some the premium hikes have been painful, he admitted, but the dioceses also understand that the trust is sincere in its efforts to keep a lid on costs while not undercutting benefits.

"We're all concerned about the rising cost of medical insurance," Shenk said. "But I think we have a very good story to tell."

--David Skidmore is a member of Episcopal Communicators who is currently a freelance journalist in Chicago.



reviews and resources

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Dates set for Evangelism Leaders Conference

The 1992 Evangelism Leaders Conference, scheduled for Glorieta, New Mexico, November 30-December 5, will bring lay leaders together to explore the possibilities of evangelism in daily life. Byron Rushing, a Massachusetts state legislator, will present the keynote address on "The Challenge of the Ministry of the Laity in Today's World." The conference agenda includes symposia, workshops, daily Bible study and regional group meetings. Among the speakers will be the Rev. Dr. Cyril C. Okorochoa, coordinator of the Decade of Evangelism for the Anglican Consultative Council; Canon Philip King, secretary for the Board of Mission and Unity for the Church of England; and the Rev. Peter Elliott, head of the evangelism office of the Anglican Church of Canada. Registration fee for the conference is \$75, and room and board ranges from \$295 for a single to \$175 for four-person occupancy. To register, write or phone Evangelism Ministries, 815 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017; (800) 334-7626 ([800] 321-2231 in New York State), extension 5268.

Parish communication kit available

How can congregations communicate more effectively? A new series of illustrated brochures, *Telling Your Story*, gives useful tips and pointers in ten areas: newsletters, photography, bulletin boards, desktop publishing, direct mail, news releases, radio, the telephone, videos and general marketing. The Office of Communication recommends these ecumenically authored brochures for Episcopal congregations of all sizes. Available separately for \$.25 each, or together as a *Parish Communication Kit* (part no. 51-9143) for \$2.50. Order from Episcopal Parish Services, (800) 223-2337 (outside New York) or (212) 661-1253.